

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO*

EXCERPTS FROM OUR STATE MEDICAL JOURNAL

Vol. VII, No. 12, February, 1909

From some editorial notes:

Why Not Good Laws?—A good many wise men have said that it would pay the state richly to allow our legislators to draw an annual salary for, say, ten years, and stay at home and attend to their several businesses. But that is altogether too Utopian. A legislator is to legislate and every two years he must do something. Then why not see that some good things are done; some things for the public health and welfare? Or shall it always be that we have first consideration for the hog and the dollar, and then, if we have time, devote a little of it to children's lives and the public health? . . .

About Editorials.—The question is occasionally asked by some members, and at times presents itself in the form of criticism, "Why does not the journal devote its editorial space to strictly scientific editorials on medical subjects, written by the leading men in the state?" The same question presented itself to the Publication Committee some years ago and was discussed at length. The gist of the matter, without going into details, is about this: There are plenty of medical journals dealing exclusively with scientific medical questions; the scientific editorials in *The American Medical Association Journal*, for instance, are the best of their kind published. This journal was established for the purpose of stimulating organization; of helping the physicians of California in material ways; of bringing to their attention questions of vital sociological importance. . . .

Insurance Impertinence.—Surely, there can be nothing under heaven more absolutely and insultingly impertinent than an insurance company. It calmly says to the medical profession, "You are a cheap bunch and we will dole out to you what we please; we will pay you about what we would have to pay ordinary unskilled labor, and we, the officers, will take all the surplus income as our salaries." . . .

From an article on "*The Utilization of Social Waste Products*" by W. A. Briggs, M.D., Sacramento.

One of the chief factors in modern industrial progress is the utilization of those by-products which formerly were mostly if not wholly waste. Coal-tar is a noteworthy example of these one-time wastes, which, in so large a measure, constitute not only the wealth of the modern chemist, but in this particular instance, of the manufacturer, artist, and therapist, also. . . .

From an article on "*The Treatment of Tuberculosis with Intravenous Injections of Tuberculin and Atoxyl*" by Max Rothschild, M.D., San Francisco.

The following paper gives a report of a number of cases of tuberculosis which have been treated with intravenous injections of Koch's old tuberculin and atoxyl, with more or less rest in bed, and with a preparation of creosote and phenacetin internally. . . .

From an article on "*The Itch*" by Douglass W. Montgomery, M.D., San Francisco.

With a fine eye out for something with vim and snap to it, the Scotch took the thistle for their emblem.

* This column strives to mirror the work and aims of colleagues who bore the brunt of society work some twenty-five years ago. It is hoped that such presentation will be of interest to both old and new members.

(Continued in front Advertising Section, page 14)

BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA*

By CHARLES B. PINKHAM, M. D.
Secretary-Treasurer

News Items

On January 15, 1934, Governor Rolph reappointed to the Board of Medical Examiners, Doctors Clark L. Abbott, Percival Dolman, and Charles Sturgeon, each for a term ending January 15, 1938.

The 1933 annual report of the Board of Medical Examiners, recently filed with Governor Rolph, mentions that statistics show "the credulous in this country pay \$125,000,000 every year for the upkeep of fortune tellers, crystal gazers, astrologers, numerologists, palmists, card manipulators, tea-leaf readers and other charlatans," the report indicating that out of 3.1 billion dollars spent annually in the United States for the prevention and care of sickness, \$300,000,000 were wasted on patent medicines and \$127,000,000 on cultists not prepared to render professional care. An "army of fakers delude the gullible, break the law, destroy health and not infrequently maim or kill." Closer coöperation between federal, state, and municipal law enforcement agencies gives promise to further curtail this army of fakers.

Radio broadcasting affords unusual opportunities for fakers to approach an enormous group heretofore reached by printed advertisement. The popularity of radio advertising may be accounted for, because to hear something told is more enjoyable than to have to read it. Limited literacy or deficient eyesight is also said to be a factor in the popularity of this new form of advertising. Soothsayers buy time on various broadcast programs, vend hokum at so much per, sell knowledge which they do not possess, and give advice that is often destructive.

Willard Thompson, alias Wilber Lester Parker, referred to in the board's 1931 annual report, again visited California and imposed on our citizens during the year just closed. He was recently reported arrested by federal authorities in Mississippi.

Another 1931 impostor (George Stanley Paris) fell into the clutches of the law in 1933, and is now said to be doing time in the state prison at Folsom.

John W. Ramsey, falsely claiming medical credentials, and in trouble in San Francisco in 1926, is sought by the police on a warrant charging him with violation of the Medical Practice Act, and Frederick Woelfli, falsely claiming medical credentials, is said to be serving a sentence in Napa County.

Again the "face peelers" took their fatal toll, and three licensed physicians and surgeons were called before the board for aiding and abetting the unlicensed in these operations.

Eyelash dye exacted its toll in California as well as elsewhere.

The hospital association racketeers were unusually active in 1933, selling contracts for medical, surgical, dental and hospital services, which complainants said were not fulfilled. The bank accounts of the promoters waxed fat, and the shame of it all lies in the fact that those least able to lose are the ones who are stung.

Faith in mystic charms, bordering on voodooism, is still found among certain residents of our state.

Thirty-eight licentiates were called before the board for various derelictions, the larger number having been charged with narcotic violations. Fourteen licenses were revoked, one license suspended, and fourteen licentiates were placed on probation. Three were dis-

* The office addresses of the California State Board of Medical Examiners are printed in the roster on advertising page 6.

(Continued in front Advertising Section, page 14)